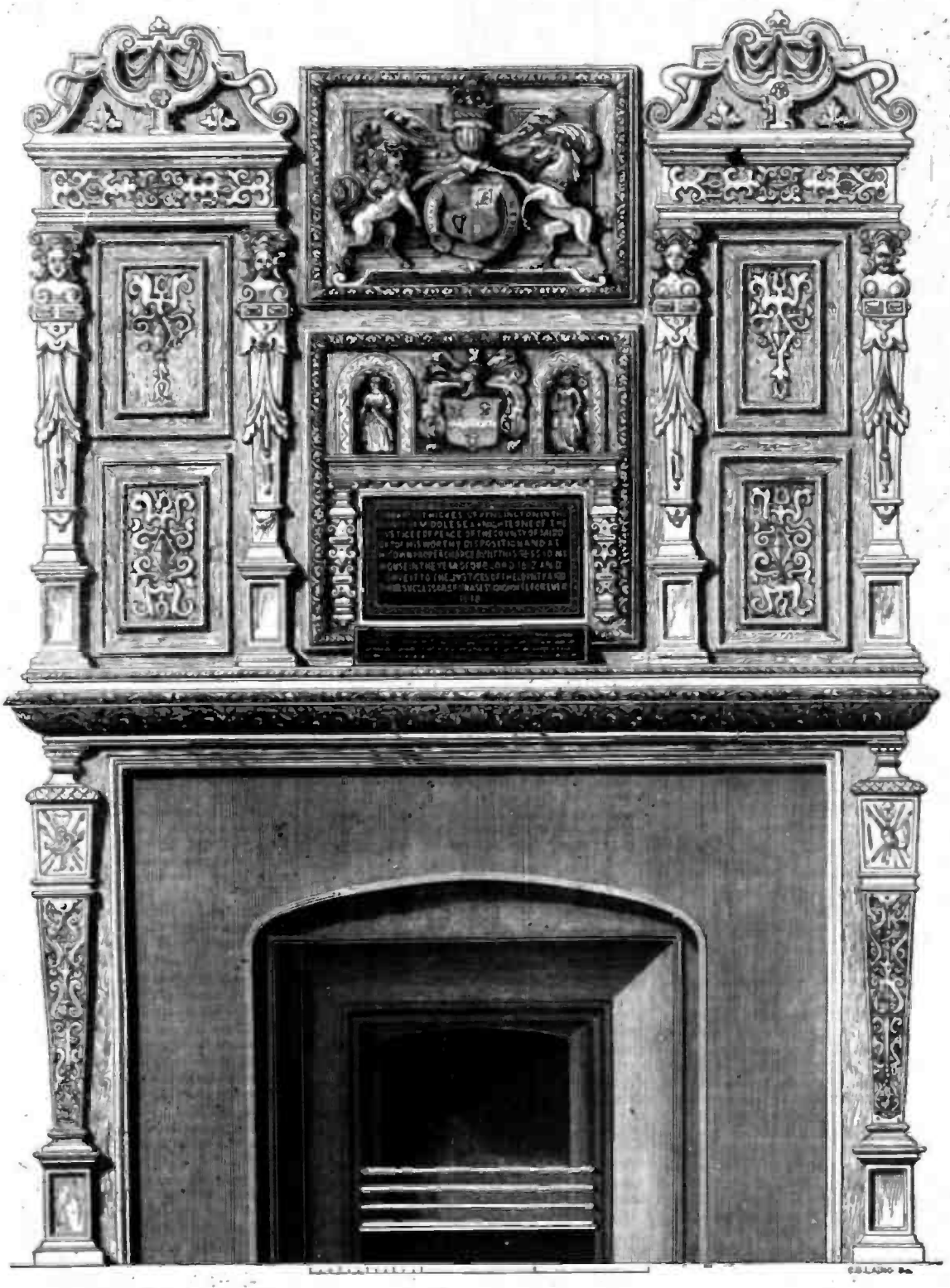
SIR BAPTIST HICKES'S CHIMNEY-PIECE,

IN THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY SESSIONS' HOUSE.



(From a Drawing by Mr. C. J. Richardson, F.S.A.)

This relique is now in the south-east room on the ground-story of the County Sessions' House, Clerkenwell, having, upon the building of the New County Hall, been brought there from the former hall, built by Sir Baptist Hickes in the broad part of St. John's-street, opposite the Windmill Inn, a site still celebrated by the miles along the north road being measured from "*the spot where Hickes's Hall formerly stood.*"

The chimney-piece itself is a good example of the style of the day which was shortly afterwards superseded by the improved Palladian architecture of Inigo Jones. The filling up of the space between the carved mantel and the terminal jamb-pilasters is modern, and was most likely originally open.

The arabesques on the mantel, pilasters, friezes, and panels, very closely resemble Spanish-moresco work.

The double pilastered wings of the story above the mantel are not badly designed, though the inner pilasters appear to bear upon void. The termination of the central mass above the arms of King James I. wants connection with the wings, which might easily have been effected by some kind of surmounting pediment or arched cornice. Beneath the royal arms is the following inscription:—

SIR BAPTIST HICKES, OF KENSINGTON
IN THE
COVNTY OF MIDDLESEX,
KNIGHTE,
ONE OF THE
IVSTICES OF PEACE OF THIS COVNTY OF MIDD
OVT OF HIS WORTHY DISPOSITION
AND AT
HIS OWNE PROPER CHARGE
BVYLT THIS SESSION HOUSE, IN THE YEARE OF
OVR LORD GOD 1612, AND
GAVE IT TO THE IVSTICES OF PEACE OF THIS
COVNTY,
AND THEIR SUCCESSORS
FOR A SESSION-HOUSE FOR EVER
1618.